DEWAN BAHADUR L. VENKATAKRISHNAN:

(1) Mr. R. Raja Raja Varma, Executive Engineer, Quilon.

(2) Mr. E. Sivaraman Nair, Executive Engineer, Nagercoil.

Arrest of Messrs. A. K. Tampi and C. S. Gopala Pillai.

20. *MR. K. A. MATHEW: Will the Government be pleased to state why Messrs. A. K. Tampi and C. S. Gopala Pillai were arrested after Government's recent withdrawal of prohibitory orders?

MR. S. PARTHASARATHY AIYANGAR *(Inspector-General of Police)*: Because they were absconders and were arrested as such when found.

Political prisoners.

21. *MR. K. A. MATHEW: Will the Government be pleased to give the names of the political prisoners undergoing imprisonment in Travancore now?

MR. S. PARTHASARATHY AIYANGAR: There are no political prisoners undergoing imprisonment now.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: May I know whether R. V. Thomas, former member of the State Congress Working Committee, is a political prisoner?

MR. S. PARTHASARATHY AIYANGAR: He is not a political prisoner but a convict under the ordinary law.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: May I know whether an offence under the Sedition Act is a political offence?

PRESIDENT: Order, Order. So that there might be no difficulty in this matter this Government have always taken the view that sedition according to the Penal Code is the greatest offence under the Law. Therefore people who are guilty under the Penal Code and not under any special enactments are convicts. Their conviction is not like that of a political prisoner and their status will not be that of a political prisoner.

MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: May I know from the Inspector-General what he means by the expression 'Political Prisoner?'

MR. S. PARTHASARATHY AIYANGAR: If it is merely on account of his activity as part of any political organisation directed against the party in power at the moment then he is a political prisoner. But if it is really under the recognised Sections of the Penal Code detailing offences against the State, it does not come under political offences.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: Is not sedition also a political offence?

MR. S. PARTHASARATHY AIYANGAR: I have frequently heard that everything is political in this country.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: May I know what the member means when he says that everything is political in this country?

MR. S. PARTHASARATHY AIYANGAR: I have heard it said that when any arrest is made it is a political offence.

PRESIDENT: Order, order. That is easily explained. When a murder case was investigated in Sind recently the argument was that the murders were committed for political reasons. So much so that Mr. Khare, the day before yesterday, stated that he will not regard

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[President.]

murders and dacoities as political offences. He had to say that because the same argument was made in Bombay that people who assassinate do so for political purposes and men charged for these offences should be regarded as political offenders and not treated as ordinary offenders against law.

MR. P.O. THOMAS: Is not criticism of Government sometimes within the purview of the Penal Code?

PRESIDENT: Order, order. Yes.

MR. P. O THOMAS: As the Law now stands and from the definition which the Inspector-General has given, is there any scope for any prisoner being a political prisoner?

MR S. PARTHASARATHY AIYANGAR: Of course. Detainees will be political prisoners.

MR. P. O. THOMAS: Will the honourable member be pleased to give an instance in which a man can become a political prisoner?

MR. S. PARTHASARATHY AIYANGAR: Detainees.

MR. P. O. THOMAS: Will the Inspector-General be pleased to state the Section regarding sedition and say whether it will come under political offences?

PRESIDENT: What is the question?

MR. P. O. THOMAS: May I know from the Inspector-General the ingredients of the offence of sedition?

MR. S. PARTHASARATHY AIYANGAR: I cannot repeat the sections.

Control on the sale of used motor cars.

22. *MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) whether control on the sale of used motor cars is lifted in British India and in the States; and

(*b*) the reasons for not lifting the control in Travancore?

MR. S. PARTHASARATHY AIYANGAR: (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) The difficulty of obtaining cars for use in the State.

MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: May I know from the Inspector-General whether the lifting of the control will not ease the difficulties in obtaining cars?

MR. S. PARTHASARATHY AIYANGAR: I will refer the honourable member to two recent publications in the Press. I cannot vouch for their truth because they are only press reports. In England they have asked for reimposition of control over cars. The restriction was lifted in Madras. But the Premier had to state that he will take severe action against the officers responsible for these speculative transactions in cars. That is due to the difficulty caused by the lifting of the restrictions.

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